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**U.S. Trade Representative Robert B. Zoellick Welcomes
Developments on China's WTO Accession**

WASHINGTON - U.S. Trade Representative Robert B. Zoellick welcomed the announcement today that members of the World Trade Organization (WTO) had completed work on conditions to admit China after more than fourteen years of negotiations. He added that the WTO Working Party on Taiwan is expected to conclude tomorrow, September 18.

"Today's decision by WTO members endorsing the terms of China's entry into the WTO will strengthen the global economy and the international rule of law for trade. China has made a firm commitment to the rest of the world to open its markets and adhere to international, market-based rules, which will help American workers, consumers, farmers and exporters," he stated after China's Working Party meeting concluded this afternoon in Geneva.

Zoellick also thanked Ambassador Jeff Bader and the U.S. team in Geneva for persevering amidst extraordinary circumstances to achieve this success.

One of the last remaining issues holding up the conclusion of China's WTO Working Party meeting involved rights of American insurance companies operating in China. Ambassador Zoellick said, "The commitments China made in 1999 are preserved and strengthened in the final report negotiated last week. These commitments establish China's obligation to permit insurance companies to set up new branches with the same ownership basis as before its WTO accession, and on an MFN basis."

China's accession package will be forwarded for final approval by the WTO Ministerial Conference planned for November in Doha, Qatar.

After approval by the November Ministerial Conference, the People's Republic of China and Taiwan will be able to join the WTO after their governments formally accept the terms of their accession packages.

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